

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STOCKHOLM 687

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IT, SW

SUBJECT: PALME AIDE DENIES ACCURACY OF REMARKS ATTRIBUTED TO HIM
IN NEW YORK TIMES STORY

REF: STOCKHOLM 0222 (EXDIS)

1. PIERRE SCHORI, AIDE TO PRIME MINISTER PALME, HAS DENIED THE ACCURACY OF REMARKS ATTRIBUTED TO HIM IN A NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE BY CRAIG WHITNEY OF FEBRUARY 5 HEADED "EUROPEAN SOCIALISTS REBUFF U.S. ON TIES WITH REDS." SCHORI TOLD POLITICAL COUNSELOR FEBRUARY 9 THAT COMMENTS ASCRIBED TO HIM REGARDING U.S. VIEWS ON DANGERS OF SOCIALIST COOPERATION WITH WEST EUROPEAN COMMUNIST PARTIES WERE "INACCURATE AND DISTORTED."

2. ACCORDING TO SCHORI, WHITNEY HAD CALLED HIM FROM BONN TO ASK HIM ABOUT AMBASSADOR STRAUZ-HUPE'S CALL ON PRIME MINISTER PALME JANUARY 15 PRIOR TO HELSINGOR MEETING (REFTEL). SCHORI CLAIMS WHITNEY KNEW OF AMBASSADOR'S CALL AND THAT SUBJECT CONCERNED U.S. VIEWS ON POSSIBLE SOCIALIST COLLABORATION WITH COMMUNISTS IN POPULAR FRONT GOVERNMENTS. SCHORI CONFIRMED THAT THIS SUBJECT "AMONG OTHER ISSUES" HAD BEEN DISCUSSED IN AMBASSADOR'S CALL ON PALME, AND THEN MOVED ON TO DISCUSSION OF SWEDISH VIEW OF COMMUNIST-SOCIALIST COOPERATION. (THERE WAS NO FURTHER DISCUSSION OF AMBASSADOR'S CALL, HE ASSERTS.) SCHORI SAYS HE SET
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PAGE 02 STOCKH 00687 091206Z

FORTH WELL KNOWN SWEDISH VIEW ON THIS QUESTION, I.E.,

THAT WHILE SUCH COOPERATION IS OUT OF THE QUESTION IN NORTHERN EUROPE WHERE COMMUNIST PARTIES ARE SO SMALL, IN THOSE COUNTRIES WHERE PARTY HAS 25 PERCENT OR MORE OF THE TOTAL VOTE, THEN THE INDIVIDUAL SOCIALIST PARTIES SHOULD MAKE DECISION RE COOPERATION IN LIGHT OF THEIR OWN CIRCUMSTANCES. SCHORI DENIED FLATLY THAT HE HAD USED TERMS SUCH AS "RIDICULOUS," "COUNTERPRODUCTIVE," "SHORT-SIGHTED," OR "GUT REACTION" TO DESCRIBE U.S. VIEWS. THE ENTIRE REFERENCE TO HIM WAS TAKEN "COMPLETELY OUT OF CONTEXT," SCHORI AVERRED.

3. THE PRIME MINISTER'S AIDE SAID HE WAS "DEEPLY EMBARRASSED" BY STORY AND IMMEDIATELY UPON ITS PUBLICATION HAD CALLED THE MFA'S DIRECTOR OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS, LEIFLAND, TO DENY ACCURACY OF STORY. HE ADDED THAT HE FELT PARTICULARLY DISTRESSED THAT STORY HAD SUGGESTED THAT HE WAS COMMENTING UNFAVORABLY ON AMBASSADOR'S CALL ON PRIME MINISTER.

4. COMMENT: IT IS , OF COURSE, DIFFICULT TO ASCERTAIN VERACITY OF SCHORI'S DENIAL. WHILE UNDENIABLY CLEVER AND ARTICULATE, HE ALSO HAS THE REPUTATION OF BEING AN OPPORTUNIST WHO HAS BEEN FREQUENTLY CRITICAL OF THE U.S. ON OTHER HAND, IT IS LIKELY THAT WHITNEY -- WHOM SCHORI CLAIMS WAS OPENLY CRITICAL OF U.S. POLICY RE COMMUNIST-SOCIALIST COOPERATION -- PUT WORDS INTO SCHORI'S MOUTH. IN ANY EVENT, SCHORI HAS ASKED THAT HIS DENIAL BE TRANSMITTED TO U.S. AUTHORITIES.
STRAUSZ-HUPE'

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